

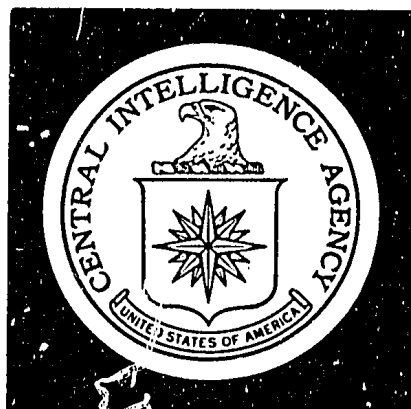
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Intelligence Memorandum

Zambia's Kaunda: Mission Impossible

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
5 November 1970

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Zambia's Kaunda: Mission ImpossibleSummary

Last month, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia led a delegation of black African officials on a one-week tour of Western Europe and the US to lobby in favor of black African positions on southern African issues. The mission had been established by the Organization of African Unity and was commissioned by the Lusaka Nonaligned Conference to press for the elimination of all Western economic and military ties with South Africa, Portugal, and Rhodesia. Specifically, the delegation hoped to persuade Britain not to sell defensive maritime equipment to South Africa and to induce Western governments and private firms associated with the construction of the \$300-million Cabora Bassa hydro-electric scheme in Portuguese Mozambique to withdraw from the project.

The mission's whirlwind effort accomplished little and may have hurt the black African cause. Western governments are generally reluctant to take additional measures against white southern Africa. Such action, they believe, would not only entail considerable sacrifice for some but would also strengthen, rather than weaken, the resistance of white African minorities to political change. Unwilling to accept this analysis, Kaunda and other militant black African leaders have begun publicly to condemn Western ties with the white regimes and

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to warn Western governments of vague, unspecified consequences. This tactic has antagonized some Western leaders.

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A temporary strain in black African - US relations developed because Zambian and US officials could not find a mutually agreeable time for President Nixon to meet with Kaunda during his brief stop in the US.

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Kaunda and Southern Africa

1. Kaunda's political career and Zambian nationalism have always been identified with opposition to white minority rule. The Zambian independence movement matured during the 1950s when Zambia, then Northern Rhodesia, was part of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, an ill-fated union dominated by white Southern Rhodesians. Having experienced and opposed both British colonialism and efforts by a white minority to dominate his country, Kaunda is totally committed to the elimination of white supremacy throughout southern Africa.

2. Kaunda's devotion to the advancement of majority rule, however, has presented him with an increasingly serious dilemma. As prospects for peaceful change in southern Africa faded in the mid-1960s, he gradually came to believe that guerrilla warfare was perhaps the only way southern African blacks could win political equality. At the same time, he recognized that newly independent Zambia was totally unprepared to withstand economic or military retaliation if it gave sanctuary to the guerrillas. The defunct experiment in federation had left the economy dependent on the neighboring white states for fuel, power, and transport facilities. Moreover, Zambia had only a 3,000-man military force.

3. Despite Zambia's weaknesses, Kaunda allowed guerrillas to store arms and take refuge in Zambia, and--at least tacitly--permitted them to use the country as a base for operations. Kaunda's initially optimistic expectation that the white regimes would soon fold under pressure gave way to the realization that they had contained the challenge and that without continuing Zambian aid the guerrillas could not develop a more serious threat.

4. In recognition of Zambia's importance to the insurgent organizations, the white governments have warned with increasing frequency that they will react

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more strongly if the Zambia-based insurgents' activity becomes "intolerable." So far, the white governments have relied on economic pressure to induce Zambia to restrict guerrilla activity; Portuguese suspension of rail traffic through Angola has been particularly effective. A number of development projects are scheduled for completion by the mid-1970s, however, which will lessen Zambia's economic vulnerability and could compel the white governments to resort to force.

5. Kaunda finds two unpalatable policy options looming ahead. On the one hand, he could rein in the guerrillas, but he considers this course intolerable because he believes it would perpetuate white minority rule. On the other hand, he could remove the restraints on guerrilla activity, but this, Kaunda realizes could lead to severe military reprisals by the white regimes.

6. In casting about for ways out of his dilemma, Kaunda apparently has become convinced that his one possible avenue of escape is for the US and other Western governments to intercede. Since late last year, he has insisted that Western interests must choose between black and white Africa. How much Kaunda actually believes Western governments could accomplish is unclear. He realizes that the West will not use military force against South Africa and Portugal, and he also has strong doubts about the effectiveness of diplomatic and economic sanctions. Nevertheless, he believes that the isolation of white southern Africa is morally important even if sanctions fail to bring down minority rule.

7. Kaunda's strategy, therefore, has been to chip away at the West's ties with southern Africa. Aware that he has virtually no direct leverage, he has concentrated on generating publicity and public sympathy in key Western countries, hoping this will produce sufficient pressures to do the job for him.

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Two Conferences Look at Southern Africa

8. The Kaunda mission was generated last July when the newly elected Conservative government in Britain announced that it intended to sell maritime defense equipment to South Africa. Recognizing that this would seriously set back efforts to isolate Pretoria, the Zambian cabinet immediately denounced the British plan as a vote of approval for apartheid and charged that the decision would put peaceful change in southern Africa beyond reach.

9. Zambia consulted with Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda--all members of the Commonwealth--to devise a joint strategy to persuade the UK to reconsider. The four African governments apparently agreed to ask the coming Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit conference to send a delegation to countries that were selling or intended to sell arms to South Africa. This proposal was approved when the African heads of state met at Addis Ababa in early September, and Kaunda was designated as the group's leader.

10. One week after the OAU session, the Non-aligned Conference (NAC), meeting in Lusaka, also focused on southern African issues. The most strongly worded resolution passed by this conference called for diplomatic and economic sanctions against the white governments as well as for contributions to the OAU's African Liberation Committee, which channels aid to the various insurgent movements. With Kaunda already designated to visit the West on the OAU mission, the NAC decided to extend his mandate by authorizing the delegation to seek Western compliance with its resolution.

11. Many Third World governments, including a number of black African states, however, do not share Kaunda's preoccupation with southern Africa issues. Although these gave their moral backing, OAU and NAC delegates did not indicate that they were prepared to take additional measures either against the

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white governments or against countries that have relations with the "White Redoubt." Even the representatives of Zambia and the three East African states who had apparently originated the proposal for the OAU mission could not agree to break relations with the UK or to leave the Commonwealth if London eventually sells arms to South Africa.

12. There are other examples of lack of resolve over the southern African issue. The OAU summit failed to resolve a serious dispute among member states over the administration of assistance to the guerrilla organizations, a disagreement that must be resolved if the recent downward trend of contributions from moderate African governments to the guerrillas is to be reversed. Moreover, the NAC resolution on decolonization was nothing more than an updated version of similar resolutions passed at previous OAU and nonaligned conferences. Neither the OAU nor the NAC has ever bothered to set up administrative machinery to deal with states which violate these resolutions.

The Kaunda Mission

13. Not surprisingly, Kaunda's mission failed to make any substantial headway in persuading Western governments to reduce their ties with the White Redoubt. Its only tangible success so far has been French President Pompidou's promise not to sell helicopters to South Africa because they could be used for counterinsurgency operations. The ban apparently applies only to new contracts; the terms of current contracts, including provisions for spare parts, are not known. The French did not indicate that they were prepared to cut back arms sales to Portuguese Africa.

14. Elsewhere, Bonn insisted that it did not provide arms to South Africa but remained firm on its commitment to provide NATO ally Portugal with weapons, subject to the proviso that these not be used in Lisbon's African territories. [REDACTED]

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Additionally, the Kaunda mission was unable to persuade any of the Western governments to change their positions on participation in the Cabora Bassa project.

15. The failure of presidents Kaunda and Nixon to meet aroused adverse reaction among black African diplomats in the UN and among Zambians in Lusaka as well as in the press of some African states.

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Kaunda and Nonalignment

16. The Lusaka summit was Kaunda's first significant plunge into nonalignment politics. He reversed his previous views and emerged from the conference as a proponent of a permanent organization to advance and coordinate Third World positions, at least on southern African and economic matters.

17. Kaunda's changing attitude probably reflects two developments. First, over the past few years he has become increasingly disillusioned with the West, and especially with its policies toward white southern Africa. He has also been disappointed by the failure of Western-owned businesses in Zambia to invest in enterprises that Lusaka considered important to the country but which the firms deemed unprofitable. Since 1968, the government has nationalized virtually all important businesses in the

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country and has exerted a variety of pressures on the remaining private firms in an effort to force them to adopt policies more to the government's liking.

18. Secondly, ties with Yugoslavia have steadily improved, and a friendly personal relationship has developed between Kaunda and Tito, the primus inter pares of nonalignment. An exchange of visits between Tito and Kaunda earlier this year reinforced their favorable impressions of each other and brought out their common interests in nonalignment and distrust of power politics--either Eastern or Western. The selection of Zambia to host the September NAC conference almost certainly resulted from this growing friendship.

19. In his opening speech at Lusaka, Kaunda strongly pressed for the establishment of some kind of permanent secretariat oriented primarily toward promoting Third World economic interests.

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20. An early draft resolution on economic affairs proposed a permanent bureau that, among other things, would organize pressure groups for use at GATT and other international trade forums "disadvantageous to developing nations." The proposal was not adopted, but the campaign for a permanent secretariat resulted in the passage of a "Resolution on the Strengthening of the Role of the Nonaligned Countries" that gives Kaunda a prominent but largely honorific role in implementing the bland platitudes passed at Lusaka.

21. Thus the conference balked at any permanent structure that might claim to speak in the name of the member governments. Many delegates, however, apparently had no strong objection to the leader of a small state spending his own time, effort, and

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money to formulate positions that they could accept or reject as their national interests dictate. Recent statements by Kaunda make it clear that he recognizes that there are limits on any personal initiatives he might undertake in the name of the NAC. Consequently, aside from bitter polemics about southern Africa, Kaunda's address to the UN General Assembly on the results of the conference was a suitably vague but earnest presentation of the final resolutions adopted by the conferees.

Prospects

22. Kaunda will continue to try to persuade Western governments and private interests to disengage from white southern Africa, although he may soon realize that bitter public attacks are counter-productive. He can be expected to try other tactics, however. For example, Kaunda has considered the idea of seeking the cooperation of sympathetic governments in black Africa and elsewhere to retaliate against Western firms that refuse to cut their ties with white-ruled Africa.

23. Whatever Kaunda decides, he will continue to find that international backing for his endeavors is limited primarily to public or moral support and does not extend to substantive assistance. Voluntary compliance with OAU and NAC resolutions calling for sanctions against southern Africa has been spotty and ineffective and is likely to remain so, despite unanimous black African opposition to white minority rule. Countries that rely on and value relations with the West are even less likely to support any scheme to retaliate against Western countries or firms that maintain their ties with the White Redoubt.

24. How involved Kaunda will get in nonaligned politics in the coming months is unclear. Kaunda himself is probably still sorting out his own feelings. He was obviously flattered by the attention he received at Lusaka, and some circles have since

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touted him as a rising leader in the Third World. Already he has announced a reorganization of Zambia's Foreign Ministry and changes in diplomatic assignments that he says are designed to strengthen Zambia's new approach to foreign affairs, following the "OAU and NAC decisions to have me as their chairman." Kaunda may, however, simply exploit his "mandate" to focus world attention on southern African issues close to his heart. In the past, he has been temporarily distracted by foreign ventures only to settle back into matters closer to home.

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